

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 25, 2006

The Honorable Ralph Regula
Chairman
Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David Obey
Ranking Member
Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Regula and Ranking Member Obey:

We are concerned about proposed funding levels for the NIH, the CDC, and HRSA. We applaud you for your continued leadership in working to make funding for these agencies a priority. Specifically, we want to work with you to secure funding increases for heart disease and stroke research, prevention and treatment programs during the FY 2007 appropriations process.

Heart disease, stroke and other cardiovascular diseases remain the leading cause of death in the United States. Heart disease, alone, is America's No. 1 killer and stroke is our No. 3 killer. An estimated 71 million American adults live with the burden of these diseases. And, cardiovascular diseases cost our Nation more than any other disease—an estimated \$403 billion in medical expenses and lost productivity in 2006. Our aging population is projected to increase these costs by 54 percent by 2025.

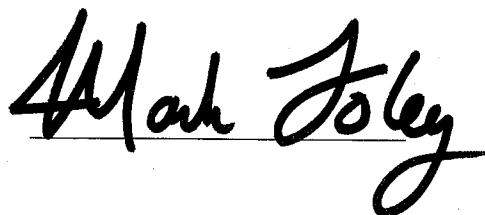
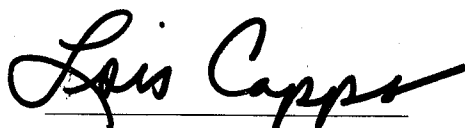
Despite these staggering statistics, the proposed NIH investment in cardiovascular disease research is estimated to decline by 15 percent between FY 2003 and FY 2007, adjusted for medical research inflation. And, no new states have been added since 2002 to the CDC Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program, even though cardiovascular diseases remain the No. 1 killer in every state. Also, the President proposes to end HRSA's Rural and Community Access to Emergency Devices Program, which saves the lives of cardiac arrest victims.

Please make heart disease and stroke research, prevention and treatment a national priority by providing significant funding increases to:

- Pursue promising NIH heart disease, stroke and other cardiovascular disease research opportunities to aggressively advance the battle against our Nation's most deadly and costly disease;
- Expand the number of states that have proven heart disease and stroke prevention programs. In FY 2007, CDC will be having an open competition for the Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program. All currently funded states will be required to re-apply for money in FY 2007 and non-funded states will be eligible to apply for funding for the first time since 2002; and
- Restore funding for HRSA's Rural and Community Access to Emergency Devices Program to its FY 2005 level to help save the lives of cardiac arrest victims.

Thank you for your careful consideration of our requests and for your continued leadership.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Murphy

Tom Daurio

Ben Card

Lynn Woolley

Benny Frank

Howard V. Berman

Tom Lanta

Norm Richs

Paul Skidde

Donald Wayne

Henry A. Wapman

Elyah E. Turnin

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Zoe Lofgren

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